On page 11, line 1, change "What is claimed is:" to --What Is Claimed Is:--.

In The Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-10, without prejudice, and add new claims11-21 as follows:

11. (New) A fuel injector for a fuel injection system of an internal combustion engine, comprising:

an energizable actuating element;

a valve needle that is axially movable along a longitudinal axis of a valve;

a fixed valve seat;

a valve seat element including an orifice following downstream from the fixed valve seat;

a valve closing section arranged on a downstream end and for working together with the fixed valve seat for opening and closing the valve, wherein:

the fixed valve seat is designed on the valve seat element;

a flattened face running perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the valve and being arranged on the downstream end of the valve closing section downstream from the fixed valve seat; and

a swirl-producing element arranged upstream from the fixed valve seat, wherein:

the flattened face includes a diameter d that is greater than a diameter D of the outlet orifice.

12. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 11, wherein:

the fuel injector is for a direct injection of a fuel into a combustion chamber of the internal combustion engine.

13. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 11, wherein:

a ratio of the diameter d of the flattened face to the diameter D of the outlet orifice is approximately 1.5.

14. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 11, wherein:

the valve closing section includes a curved area that is at least partially one of spherical and rounded, and

the flattened face is adjacent to the curved area.

15. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 11, wherein:

the valve closing section includes a conical area that is at least partially a truncated conical taper in a downstream direction, and

the flattened face follows the conical area.

16. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 11, wherein:

the swirl-producing element includes a disk-shaped swirl element directly upstream from the fixed valve seat.

17. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 11, wherein:

the outlet orifice is formed in the valve seat element.

18. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 11, further comprising:

a spray element including the outlet orifice and being arranged downstream from the valve seat element, wherein:

the spray element is fixedly connected to the valve seat element.

19. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 16, wherein:

the disk-shaped swirl element includes an inner opening area having a plurality of swirl channels that extend completely over an entire axial thickness of the disk-shaped swirl element, and

the plurality of swirl channels is not connected to an outer periphery of the disk-shaped swirl element by a peripheral edge area.

20. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 19, wherein:

the inner opening area is formed by an inner swirl chamber and by the plurality of swirl channels opening into the inner swirl chamber.

21. (New) The fuel injector according to claim 20, wherein:

the plurality of swirl channels includes ends at a distance from the inner swirl chamber, and

the ends as inlet pockets include a larger cross section than a remainder of the plurality of swirl channels.

In The Abstract:

On page 13, delete the Abstract and in its place insert the following:

--Abstract Of The Disclosure

A fuel injector, in particular a high pressure injector for direct injection of fuel into a combustion chamber of an internal combustion engine having externally supplied ignition and mixture compression, is characterized in that a valve needle, which is movable axially along a longitudinal axis of the valve, has a specially designed valve closing section on its downstream end. To open and close the valve, the valve closing section works together with a fixed valve seat. Swirl-producing elements are arranged upstream from the valve seat while a flattened face running perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the valve is provided on the downstream end of the valve closing section downstream from the valve seat.--.

Remarks

This Preliminary Amendment cancels claims 1-11, without prejudice, in the underlying PCT Application No. PCT/DE99/02658, and cancels substitute claims 1-10, without prejudice. The Preliminary Amendment also adds new claims 11-21. The new claims do not add new matter to the application but do conform the claims to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules.